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[www.homelandsecurity.ky.gov](http://www.homelandsecurity.ky.gov)

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# Creating a Culture of Preparedness

The recent White House report "Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned," illustrated in tragic detail many of our nation's preparedness and response shortcomings. As a result, the report called for a fresh strategy that would "foster a new, robust culture of preparedness."

With this goal in mind, the Commonwealth's Citizen Awareness and Public Outreach Program is working to ensure that we are doing our part to create this culture among all Kentuckians.

Recently, at the National Citizen Corps Council Meeting in Washington D.C., national officials, including President George W. Bush, expressed their support for stronger preparedness programs, a coordinated volunteer effort and the strengthening of Citizen Corps.

In Kentucky, we are on the forefront of building a culture where community and family emergency preparedness is commonplace, but we certainly have much work to do. With this in mind, you will begin receiving this new e-newsletter entitled, "*Creating a Culture of Preparedness*", to help you stay informed about the outreach and volunteer efforts taking place across the state and to open up the channels of communication about preparedness issues.

In order to build a statewide culture of preparedness, we all recognize the critical need to coordinate our resources, services and ideas. We hope that this e-newsletter will be a help to you and we invite your feedback as to how we can make it better.

Thank you for your continued efforts towards ensuring Kentucky is ready and prepared.

# Highlights of National Activities

## National Preparedness Month

National Preparedness Month (NPM) is a nationwide effort organized each year by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, and schools. The goal of NPM is to increase awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies, natural or man-made disasters, and to encourage individuals to take action.

National Preparedness Month has grown exponentially since its inception. During the first NPM in 2004, all 56 states and territories and more than 80 organizations joined the NPM Coalition and promoted public preparedness through events and activities across the nation. During the second NPM in 2005, participation more than doubled with all 56 states and territories and more than 190 organizations participating.

How can you get involved in Kentucky?

- Create a Communication Plan and Disaster Preparedness Kit
- Get involved in regional Citizen Corps Emergency Preparedness Training
- Get involved in Citizen Corps Programs
- Participate in Kentucky's National Preparedness Month's events

### Kentucky National Preparedness Month Scheduled Events

- **September 7-8** Neighborhood Watch Train the Trainer (Bowling Green)
- **September 14** Citizen Awareness and Public Outreach Conference (Frankfort)
- **September 18** Private Sector Summit (Somerset)

\*\*There will be additional events added

# Highlights of State Activities

## Strengthening Preparedness and Volunteerism

Volunteers make our Commonwealth stronger and better by reaching out to help our neighbors in need. Kentucky's Citizen Corps program, which provides localized training opportunities for all Kentuckians to become well-trained, well-prepared community volunteers, is one of Kentucky's most valuable assets. This program is currently moving forward in every region of the state to provide Kentuckians with the information they need to be prepared in the event of any emergency – natural or man-made.

The Kentucky Office of Homeland Security has recently recognized the maturation of the Citizen Corps program and subsequently has launched a new initiative to strengthen volunteerism and local preparedness in our communities by retooling the Citizen Corps program to help us better meet our national and state preparedness goals.

The strategy, which incorporates the Citizen Corps Program and a new statewide citizen awareness campaign, has brought on the development of the "Citizen Awareness and Public Outreach Program." This program was launched in March and provides information on how to make a plan and a kit for use in an emergency or disaster situation as well as informing local citizens about the dangers that face them right here in Kentucky. The campaign utilizes various forms of media including a preparedness website, radio and billboard advertising, and informational brochures.

The new streamlined awareness training, which has been developed in partnership with the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), is a four-hour awareness training focused on making a kit and a plan. This training, which will also include information about how to volunteer for Citizen Corps programs (Fire Corps, Medical Reserve Corps, Volunteers in Police Service, Neighborhood Watch, and Community Emergency Response Teams) as well as educating volunteers about disaster preparedness, has been designed to focus the information on the most critical aspects of preparedness making the program easier to attend and more attractive for a larger number of Kentuckians.

Kentucky's Citizen Corps strategy has also regionalized the Citizen Corps Councils, utilizing Kentucky's 15 Area Development Districts. This change will seek to enhance the Council's efforts to train and recruit new members.

As many Kentuckians have witnessed, recent events along the Gulf Coast and right here in the commonwealth have taught us the critical need to be prepared. It is vital that every citizen have a baseline understanding of what they need to do and have in the event of an emergency. The new Citizen Corps training and public awareness campaign will seek to accomplish this important goal. For information regarding Citizen Corps training opportunities in your area or the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security, please visit [www.ProtectYourFamily.ky.gov](http://www.ProtectYourFamily.ky.gov).



### **"Avoid the Panic Button: Protect Your Family" By the Numbers (Since March 1)**

- The campaign has touched over 2 million Kentuckians while the website, [www.ProtectYourFamily.ky.gov](http://www.ProtectYourFamily.ky.gov) has received approximately 1 million hits
- 17,000 radio PSAs and over 170 billboard ads
- Over 3,000 Posters displayed across the state
- Over 67,000 preparedness brochures have been distributed

# Highlights of Regional Activities

## Alexandria volunteers help police patrol

When Police Chief Mike Ward comes up short on resources, he doesn't turn to the taxpayers or overwork his officers. He relies on his team of VIPS - Volunteers in Police Service.

He has eight volunteers in his department, which will be starting a new class in June. They wear khaki pants with a golf shirt that sports a VIPS emblem.

"Some help with administration tasks in the office," said Ward. "Several are qualified to take the cruiser on citizen's patrol doing business checks and vacation checks - rattling doors after hours. They help us out by responding to accidents and work the traffic so the officers can work the accident itself."

The program started in July 2004. Some of the volunteers have joined law enforcement full time. Howard Trapnell was hired by Ward as a criminal investigator.

Trapnell, a former Marine from New York who retired to his wife's home of Northern Kentucky, was happy playing golf until Ward approached him. He had done investigative work with the Marines.

"He told me he was starting this new program and wanted me to be part of it. ... A year later, he came to the house and put an application in my hand," said Trapnell. "I realized I missed it and enjoyed it."

Jeff Claybern has been a volunteer since the program's inception. The 48-year-old Alexandria native said he had a calling to do police work but had too much invested in his day job at General Electric. The VIPS program gives him a way to do both.

"I do mostly patrol work," said Claybern, "If I see something out of the ordinary, I call a regular officer."

Applicants for the program must be 18, possess a Kentucky driver's license and have a good driving record, have no felony or misdemeanor convictions within the last five years, possess competent written and verbal skills, complete the VIPS academy, attend a monthly team meeting and training, perform 16 hours of volunteer duty each month and be in good physical condition.

"Before we hire them, we put them through almost the entire process we would put an applicant through that wanted to be a police officer because they have full access to the police department," Ward said. "They do a lot of things that are confidential."

Ward emphasizes the diverse background of the volunteers.

"We've got some kids in college up to retired people - insurance company employees, a retiree from AT&T, one works in manufacturing, one works for P&G - an array of different lifestyles and life experiences," said Ward.

No matter the background, each is interested in serving the community, Ward said.

"I like mostly just being able to help them out. This is a great department. How they handle everything so professional. They are a good bunch of guys to be with," said Claybern.

Applications for the VIPS program can be found on the department's Web site at [www.alexandriaky.org](http://www.alexandriaky.org).

By: Howard McEwen  
-Alexandria Enquirer



# Get Involved

To get involved in the Citizen Corps Emergency Preparedness Training or your regional Citizen Corps activities please contact your regional Citizen Corps Coordinator.



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## Best Practices

**We are currently looking for best practices to share across the Commonwealth.**

Please email your best practices to Jaime Shipley, [Jaime.shipley@ky.gov](mailto:Jaime.shipley@ky.gov)

## Lessons Learned

### **Lessons Learned from the Florence Police Department**

- Have definite duties and responsibilities for volunteers
- Conduct a thorough background check, not just a criminal record check
- Match volunteer's abilities and strengths to the needs of the department
- Recognize accomplishments

Please email your lessons learned to Jaime Shipley, [Jaime.shipley@ky.gov](mailto:Jaime.shipley@ky.gov)